

MEMORANDUM  
of the  
ONTARIO AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL  
to the

ROYAL COMMISSION ON RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

---

The Ontario Agricultural Council was organized in 1932 at the request of the then Minister of Agriculture for the purpose of presenting before the Government from time to time the consolidated viewpoint of County Councils on agricultural matters. This organization is composed of a member of each County Council of Ontario, except four in the extreme eastern part of the province.

The memorandum which we respectfully desire to present before the Royal Commission and Railways and Transportation is divided into two parts - part A dealing with the division of administrative authority and the costs of road construction and maintenance as between the Provincial and Municipal Governments; and part B involving the setting of license fees for motor trucks and the question of maintenance of present competitive rates for the hauling of farm products and supplies needed on the farm, as well as the extent to which farmers shall be exempted from the regulations governing commercial transports in the matter of trucking by farmers.



Part A - In respect to administration and cost of road building and maintenance this Council makes the following recommendations:

1. That the Provincial Government increase its subsidy on County Roads, so that counties may construct roads adequate to present day traffic needs and maintain the present roads in a satisfactory condition.

2. That the provisions of Sections 7 and 8 of Highway Improvement Act be strictly enforced and that all revenue and taxes collected from motor vehicles be earmarked for use as highway expenditures only.


3. That the administration and control of the construction and maintenance of township and county roads be continued in the hands of the municipalities as at present.

4. That a special subsidy in excess of the ordinary highway grant be made immediately available to the county and township councils by the Provincial Government for the rebuilding of dangerous, worn out, obsolete, and inadequate bridges by structures constructed with a view to present and future traffic demands.

In support of these representations this Council would mention the following facts.

The County Councils have been building roads for





Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2023 with funding from  
University of Toronto

<https://archive.org/details/31761118485846>

for many years and it is conceded on all sides, without criticism and both efficiently and economically. The greater the distance between the place of expenditure of money and the authority governing it, the greater is the cost per unit of work done. From their long record of road building the counties have amply demonstrated their ability to construct satisfactory roads.

The contributions of the Provincial Government in the five years ending March 31st, 1937 were \$6,139,141.00 to township roads and \$8,418,830.00 to county roads, and \$1,628,214.00 on King's Highways plus the annual service charges on the net highway debt which in the aggregate amounted to around \$70,000,000.00 and in addition some road work performed in Northern Ontario as a relief project and an aid to colonization and settlement. In these same five years the Provincial Government took in almost \$125,000,000. in revenue which properly ought to have been credited to the Highway Improvement Fund., The difference between receipts and expenditures for highway purposes in this five year period are at once seen to be of extremely large proportions.

The Provincial subsidy on County Roads was increased from 40 to 50% about 13 years ago, at which time the total registration of motor vehicles was approximately 350,000 in Ontario. In 1937 the registration of motor vehicles had risen to 600,000 while during the same years 1925 to 1937 the Provincial revenue from road sources increased from \$15,219,211.00 to more than \$27,000,000.00 In other words, the motor traffic doubled and





and the Provincial Government's revenue from road sources increased by almost 100% while the grant to County Roads was only extended from 40 to 50%. In 1935 Counties were relieved of contributing 20% toward Provincial Highways but the extension of King's Highways has tended greatly to augment the number of motor vehicles and the extent of motor traffic on county and township roads. At the same time the size of loads carried by commercial trucks has also greatly increased and consequently demand a much better type of subsidiary road. When the Provincial Government took over the full cost of King's Highways, there was outstanding by the County Councils large amounts of bonds previously issued for the building of these highways. At the end of 1936 counties' debentures outstanding on account of King's Highways totalled the sum of \$6,423,917.00

Part B - In respect to the trucking and handling of farm products and the use of farmer-owned trucks, the Ontario Agricultural Council respectfully recommends

1. That a farmer be allowed to obtain a license for one truck at a nominal fee, and that he be permitted to truck farm products grown or produced by himself or other farmers to market or to other farms anywhere in Ontario, and farm supplies,

And furthermore that they be allowed to accept any kind of a commercial return pay load, because if this privilege is not extended farmer-trucker cannot hope to purchase a truck with any assurance of being able to provide economical and efficient means





of transportation for either himself or his neighbours. The truck has **made** possible a cheap era of transportation, and under no conditions should the farmers be deprived of this advantage.

And furthermore that farmer-truckers be entirely exempted from all P.C.V. regulations for one truck.

2. That no set schedule of trucking fees be set for anykind or class of farm goods, or farm supplies.

In support of these recommendations our Council would point out

1. That the rural population of Ontario in 1931 amounted to 38.9% of the entire population of the province, and its trucking requirements are very large and of many diverse kinds.

2. That the average annual income <sup>farm</sup> per family in Ontario in 1936 was less than \$1200, and that the farm produce is sold in open competition at home and abroad with produce from all other lands. As a result it is absolutely essential that farmers be enabled to get their transportation needs as efficiently and economically as possible. Farmers cannot to pay high rates.

3. Farm produce is perishable and a large number of trucks must be available at all times at many places to handle it when ready or to get it to market when prices are favourable. Milk and fruit products will quickly bring to mind the urgency of this requirement.

4. Through Municipal taxation the farmer has largely built all the township and county roads as well as paid a substantial contribution toward the building of King's Highways. Surely the



Farmer ought not to have his prior rights taken away from him and handed over to the P.C.V.trucker, if he can do his own or other farmers' trucking cheaper.

5. If the Commercial trucker can handle farm merchandise more efficiently than the farmer-trucker, he already has the opportunity of doing so, without being given a monopoly on this type of business. In the past Commercial Transport Companies have not proved that farm trucking was best adapted to the type of service they were prepared to give. During rush seasons or days when the weather is favourable oftentimes huge quantities of fruit have to be moved. A farm owned truck conveniently available here, there and everywhere at a moment's notice is the only solution to the farmers' transportation needs and its peculiar character.



